

Farmers-Nomads conflict: effective local ways of conflicts resolutions over land use rights, in Greater Kordofan State, Sudan

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Abstract— This study was carried out in Greater Kordofan, Sudan, to explore the effective local ways of conflict resolutions and reconciliations over land use rights between farmers and nomads. The primary data were collected from five villages namely; Umdam, Tongaro, Habil, Dallang, and Abu Kirais through detailed field surveys using a questionnaire, interviews and group discussion. Cases as another means of data collection were also used to collect information from local institutions and groups of farmers and nomads. The results showed that 59.3% of the respondents (farmers and nomads) believed that the main causes of conflict were crops damaged by livestock. The study also found that farmers with a high percentage of 80.9% preferred the solutions made by a traditional council system in their communities. However, this study provides a concrete base of information regarding conflict resolutions that might help both local leaders and governments to understand the complexity of the issue in Great Kordofan.

Keywords— Farmers, Nomads, Kordofan, Conflict, Resolutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

In human history, conflict was deep-rooted in societies at various parts of the globe. In several studies, the conflict has been described as a complex and complicated phenomenon that needs to be understood at different levels (Jerke, 2008). According to Arezki, et al(2015). Conflicts defined as natural phenomenon which considered the competition between people or groups with different interests, thoughts, beliefs, values, and goals.

Sudan is the largest third country in Africa with an area of approximately 1,861,484 sq.km (Nimir & Elzein, 2015). Sudan has longest civil war in Africa since independence in 1956. It was exposed to severe civil war in different parts, especially at south Sudan, Darfur, South Kordofan, and the Blue Niles States which led to the referendum of South Sudan in July 2011.

Conflict over natural resources is a common phenomenon in Africa and particularly in Sudan due to different ethnic groups and religions (Reuveny, et al, 2011). Agriculture is considered a backbone of Sudan's economy. More than 80% of the population in Sudan living in rural areas(Brinceño-Garmendia, et al, 2009). Therefore, almost all the population is engaged in agriculture and grazing as the main source of income. Greater Kordofan is one of the most producing areas of different agricultural crops and livestock (FAO, 2019). While during the past few decades, Greater Kordofan has witnessed dramatic changes in natural resources such as vegetation cover, agriculture, and rangeland. This change is due to a prolonged and repeated period of droughts, desert encroachment and on-going war in South Kordofan (Munzoul, 2006). All these factors together have created a suitable environment for conflict between the farmers and nomads over land use rights in Greater Kordofan.

However, this conflict has threatened the lives of all people who settled the area. Regardless of the on-going conflict between farmers and nomads still the society has the potentiality of coexistence through their traditional approaches of reconciliations. The traditional leaders of these communities have an undeniable role in solving such type of conflict. Moreover, local governments also play an indispensable role in this conflict between farmers and nomads by delineating nomad's routes. In this paper, an attempt has been made to investigate the local or traditional approaches of conflict resolutions and reconciliations between farmers and nomads in Greater Kordofan.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Customary land tenure systems and land use rights of ordinary people in Sudan

In Sudan like the elsewhere African continent, the majority of the rural population especially farmers and nomads mainly depend on land and natural resources in securing their livelihoods (Nkonya, et al, 2016). The issue of land tenure does not give attention that deserves and so far there is no proper action has been taken at least by Sudanese government to address the issue (Dlamini, 2015). In nomadic communities, the communal right has become so well embedded in their culture and daily life (Shanmugaratnam N, 2008). Change communal land ownerships in Sudan goes back to the colonial era when hungry colonizers circumvent land rules so as to extract and grabbed the natural resources with low cost for their own benefit (Abdalla & Elhadary, 2010). Several land acts have been introduced such as acts of 1925 and 1930. The overall objective is to dismantle customary land tenure systems based on common property and to provide the state full power to control and owned lands (Babiker, 2008). Sudan is one of the African countries which have witnessed the system of communal right since a long time. This system offers the tribal leaders power to manage and distribute the land fairly overall member of their community (Abdalla, & Samat, 2012). Generally, the system consists of three administrative tiers these are *Nazir* who is in charge of the entire tribal administrative and judicial affairs, *Omdas* those who supporting by *Nazir* and took the responsibility of tribal subsections and *Sheikh* who are the village head man. All these tribal leaders work in harmony to maintain security and order in their villages. In addition to that, they play a vital role in settling disputes and conflicts between their followers and outsiders (YA, 2007). This system is based mainly on having a historic right to land which is accessed either through fighting with neighbors or in few cases granted as a gift by (*Sultan*) king of the State. This land is known locally as *Dar* in eastern states of Sudan or *Hakura* as in Darfur (means a homeland), which has been defined by customary or communal rights. Within the *Dareach* member or group would maintain primary rights of access to use the land for farming and grazing within the territory under the system (Komey , 2009).

2.2. Land use rights and conflict resolution between farmers and nomads

In Nigeria, according to Ofuku (2007) who suggested that local development plans and strategies should be established and directed to reduce conflicts between farmers and nomads. Further, he reported that the extent of damage and compensation should be agreed upon by both farmers and nomads at the community level with agricultural extension agents as facilitators (Ofuku & and Isife, 2009). In Yakurr Region of Cross River State, there is an urgent need for grazing cattle to access rangeland resources across the regions in order to ensure food security for livestock. In view of this, the study recommends that nomadic education and the mechanism tagged local development plans be adopted by extension agencies to reduce conflict in rural areas where grazing of cattle is inevitable (Osagie, et al, 2010). Conflict over land use can be expected to increase in Mali as populations expand and rainfall and temperatures become more erratic. However, while measures that slow the pace of these changes are important, In some cases, formalizing agreements and having those backed by trusted customary or government authorities may engender greater commitment and respect for the established rules (Olateju, 2010). Generally, the use of conflict in plural legal systems was prompted by current land and water reforms that are underway in most African countries. These reforms focus on the use of statutory legal systems to regulate the use of land and water resources. However, all of these countries have a pluralistic legal system-land and water resources are regulated by different pieces of legislations and institutions, including statutory law, customary laws of different ethnic groups as well as Islamic law (Roy, 2005). The diverse customary norms and laws are often more important than statutory law and are relied upon in resolving natural resource management conflicts. In these countries, statutory laws regulate very few human activities. However, neglect of customary laws may have negative consequences for individuals and groups who were better served by customary based systems (Juma, 2004).

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The study area

This study was conducted in Greater Kordofan State, Sudan. It is sharing a border with the Republic of South Sudan and covers an area of nearly 380,000 km²from total Sudan's territory. It's extended from semi-arid vegetation at north to poor and rich Savannah in the south (Kamal Eldin, et al 2015). Agriculturally, Greater Kordofan State is one of most producing areas

of agricultural crops in Sudan. It has highly fertile soil that supports the cultivation of different cash crops. Similarly, the state has abundant livestock comprises of main cattle. Populations in Greater Kordofan State were estimated to be around 4.2 million people, 75% of these population are living in rural areas (Fatih, et al. 2007). Farming and grazing are the major activities of the people.

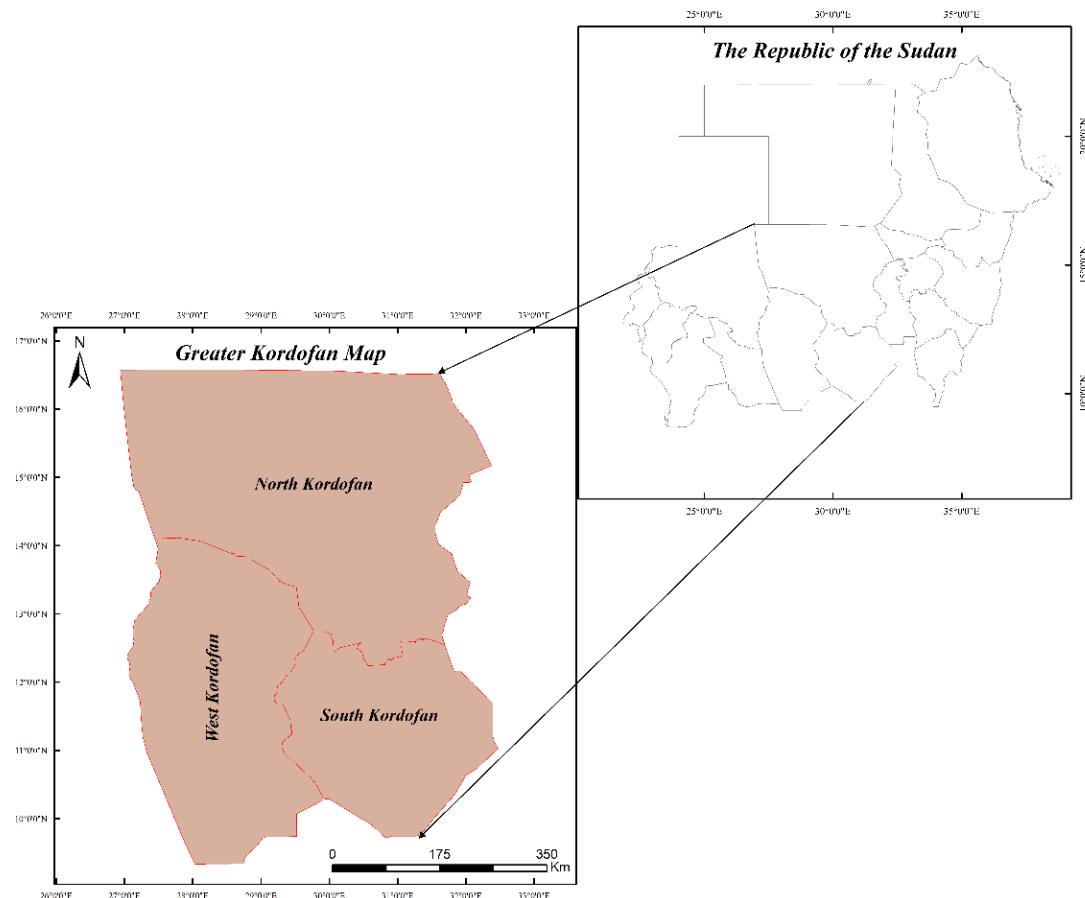


FIG.1. Location of Greater Kordofan in Sudan

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 The primary data

Primary data for this study were collected using various means such as a questionnaire, schedule interview, group discussion, cases as well as observations. 19 villages in Greater Kordofan State have recorded a higher conflict incidence between farmers and nomads. Out of these villages, 5 villages were randomly selected, namely: Umdam, Tongaro, Habila, Dallang, and Abu Kirais and they are most associated with farmers and nomads conflicts according to local government records.

3.2.2 The secondary data

The secondary data were collected from various resources such as research articles and published and non-published reports and documents from related institutions.

3.3 Data analysis

The analytical procedure used in this study was a descriptive statistic method in order to identify effective local ways using by respondents (farmers and nomads) for conflict resolutions over land-use rights in Greater Kordofan that helped to classify the responses into meaningful categories. Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) was used as tool for analysis. Qualitative data has been analyzed using content analysis (CA) technique. Data broke down into smaller meaningful units of information and tendencies then analyzed in details. CA is one of the numerous research methods used to analyze text

data(Ziran BAI, 2018). The content analysis describes a family of analytic approaches ranging from an impressionistic, intuitive, interpretive analysis of systematic, strict textual Analysis (Tavish, Pirro, 1990).

TABLE1
THE SELECTED VILLAGES FOR FIELD SURVEY (SAMPLE SIZE) IN THE STUDY AREA

village	Population per village	Percentage $P = \frac{Pv}{Tp} \times 100$	Questionnaires number per village $Qn = \frac{ss \times p}{100}$
Umdam	500	33.3%	50
Tongaro	250	16.7%	25
Habila	200	13.3%	20
Dallang	350	23.4%	35
Abu Kirais	200	13.3%	20
Total	1500	100%	150

Where:

SS: Sample size; **TP:** Total population; **Qn:** Questionnaires number per village; **P:** Percentage; **Pv:** Population per village

IV. RESULTS

TABLE 2
THE SOURCE OF LAND USE CONFLICT AMONG THE RESPONDENTS.

Source of land use conflict	Frequency	Percent
Crop damage by livestock	89	59.3
The war in South Kordofan	17	11.3
The impact of rain shortage	5	3.3
Expansion in mechanized agriculture	39	26.0
Total	150	100.0

Source: field survey, 2017.

Table 2 shows the Crop damage, by livestock, was the main cause of conflict between farmers and nomads with percentages of 59.3 %.

TABLE 3
THE WAY OF CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS BETWEEN THE RESPONDENTS.

Types of resolutions	Type of the respondent		
	Farmers	Nomads	Total
Use of force	30.8%	69.2%	100%
Resort to local court	73.3%	26.7%	100%
Resort to local traditional system	80.9%	19.1%	100%

Source: field survey, 2017.

Table 3 shows that 80.9% of the farmers tend to solve the conflict through tradition local council system, while 69.2% from the nomadic were using force as the way of conflict solutions.

TABLE 4
FARMERS-NOMADS OPINIONS AND STRATEGIC PLANS CAN BE MADE IN ORDER TO END CONFLICT OVER LAND USE RIGHTS.

Types of solutions	Type of the respondent		Total
	Farmers	Nomads	
Enacting deterrent law	76.9%	23.1%	100%
Organize mechanized agriculture	44.1%	55.9%	100%
Stopping the war in South Kordofan	89.7%	10.3%	100%

Source: field survey, 2017.

Table 2 shows that 89.7% of farmers claim that collecting weapons is the only way of stopping the war in Greater Kordofan. 55.9% of the nomads stated that organizing mechanized agriculture is the best solution for stopping the conflict.

TABLE 5
CASES ILLUSTRATING THE MAIN CAUSES OF CONFLICTS, AND THE LOCAL SOLUTIONS FROM THE RESPONDENT'S POINT OF VIEW IN GREATER KORDOFAN.

Case 1	
Name of the location	Gouz locality- Tounjaro and Seligem villages
Type of conflict	Conflict over land use rights between farmers and nomadic
Consolidated narrative of the conflict	<p>This case was based on the group interview with farmers and nomadic.</p> <p>Tounjaro and Seligem villages are considered as semi-desert lands and the majority of the population, Arab or mixed with some Nubian tribes. In these areas practicing agriculture is major source of livelihood.</p> <p>Recently, the number of farmers is increased, and this factor plays a major role in triggering the conflict between farmers themselves, on agricultural land use rights. This population puts more pressure on the limited land and scarce natural resources that created a good environment for conflict between the farmers and nomadic.</p> <p>The land tenure within the tribe system the right to use only and is not allowed to sell to other tribes and especially nomadic.</p> <p>The conflict over land use rights between farmers and nomadic is increasing day by day, these conflicts caused by the last one attacking farms and goes inside agricultural borders. Agricultural borders are not demarcated in Sudan because most of the rain-fed land is not registered. Sometimes land erosion works to erase the traditional boundaries that built by farmers on the ground. This situation is pushing farmers into conflict.</p> <p>Poor range land and inadequate forage sometimes leads the nomads to infringement of farmers land; this situation always leads both sides to the conflict. However, farmers don't want to release the croplands to nomads in good time at the onset of the dry season. This delay is caused in part by the planting of late crops. The fact that many farmers leave the late crops unfenced makes them more potential trouble spots for nomadic coming from seasonal migration areas.</p>
Causes of conflict as given by farmers and nomads.	<p>1- Lack of agricultural land.</p> <p>2- The conflict between farmers themselves caused by the agricultural borders.</p> <p>3- Poor rangeland and inadequate forage sometimes lead the nomads to Infringement of farmers' land.</p>
The local solutions are given by farmers and nomads.	<p>1-Vertical expansion in agriculture</p> <p>2- The tradition meeting system mechanisms called (Judiah) headed by elders (local council) from both sides of the conflict</p> <p>3-(Hakama), women singers and poets who are said to influence the people from both sides to engage in conflict violently, through their songs and poetry. But sometimes they have a negative role in the conflicts.</p>

Case study Gouz locality: 2017.

TABLE 6
CASES ILLUSTRATING THE MAIN CAUSES OF CONFLICTS AND THE LOCAL SOLUTIONS FROM THE RESPONDENT'S POINT OF VIEW IN GREATER KORDOFAN STATE.

Case 2	
Name of the location	Habila scheme
Type of conflict	Conflict over land use rights between farmers and nomads.
Consolidated narrative of the conflict.	<p>This case was based on the group interview with farmers and nomads which were officially documented.</p> <p>Expanding mechanized agriculture is reduced in the area of open rangeland and occupying the routes traditionally used by nomads. Sometimes the farmers resorting to burning grazing land, with considerable damage to the environment, so that the area would not attract nomads. Farmers also reported several incidences of threats by young nomads carrying arms when confronted by farmers whose cultivated areas are encroached upon.</p>
Causes of conflict as given by farmers and nomads.	<p>1-Unregulated expansion in mechanized agriculture.</p> <p>2-Burning agricultural lands to keep the nomads away</p> <p>3- Nomads carrying modern weapons</p> <p>4- Conflicts over crop damage from nomads.</p>
The local solutions are given by farmers and nomads.	<p>1-Vertical expansion in agriculture</p> <p>2- Organize mechanized agriculture determines areas for grazing.</p> <p>3- Determines areas for grazing</p>

Case study Habila scheme: 2017.

TABLE 7
CASES ILLUSTRATING THE MAIN CAUSES OF CONFLICTS AND THE LOCAL SOLUTIONS FROM THE RESPONDENT'S POINT OF VIEW IN GREATER KORDOFAN.

Case 3	
Name of the location	Dallang
Type of conflict	The conflict between Arab nomadic and Nuba tribe.
Consolidated narrative of the conflict	<p>This case was based on the group interview with Nuba farmers and Arab nomadic and official documents from DillangPrison.</p> <p>The conflict between the Sudanese government and Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM) forces increased, and SPLM forces occupied the rich grazing areas in South Kordofan, which used to be a good grazing area for Arab nomadic from South Kordofan and other tribes. The occupied areas contained important stock routes for the nomadic tribes who are allied with the government that has used them as militias in its fight against (SPLM).</p> <p>According to Arab nomads, the insecurity generated by the civil war, in the South Kordofan, and by more localized conflicts, began to push nomads to move in larger groups, which in turn leads to overgrazing and to a greater likelihood of conflict with other resource users. For instance, growing numbers of Nubian farmers are reported to deliberately burn rangeland to keep nomadic away from their land, ostensibly to defend themselves and their crops and to avoid conflict.</p>
Causes of conflict as given by farmers and nomads.	the conflict between SPLM forces intensified, and SPLM forces occupied the rich grazing areas in the far south of South Kordofan, which used to be a good area for grazing.
The local solutions are given by farmers and nomads.	<p>1-Farmers-nomads individual and tribal alliances have a good role in the past concerning peacekeeping in the study area.</p> <p>2-Collect modern weapons from the hands of farmers and nomads especially from the Arabian nomads.</p> <p>3- Strengthening the role of local administrations in South Kordofan because all farmers and nomads are respecting the local traditional system more than the government.</p> <p>4- Stopping the war in South Kordofan and enforce the law</p>

Case study Dallang: 2017.

V. DISCUSSION

Due to ethnic group variations and tribal in greater Kordofan, our study found that each and every tribal group have their own ways of solving conflicts and many other related issues. However, there are some similar ways that were found between the different tribes due to social and cultural interaction, while all of them do not tend to solutions that come from the local government. Table 3 showed 80.9% of farmers preferred that solutions made by local traditional council system. Whereas in some cases like murder, farmers tend to seek solutions by judiciary system (local courts). Almost 69.2% of the respondent (nomadic) was trying to use forces when conflict occurred with farmers over land in grazing areas across the study area. These results are consistent with many studies in African countries, for example, Adeoye (2017) reported that 32.5% of nomadic had violent conflicts with farmers over land use. However, in some cases, farmers have shown their desire for non-governmental solutions that come out from the local traditional council. In greater Kordofan particularly, in Tongaro and Umdam villages, the results demonstrated that crops damage by livestock is the major cause of conflict. This result coincided with a study carried out in the same area which highlighted that an attack usually occurs around agricultural land. Moreover, the study showed that most of the nomads are young people. So far, during last decade the conflict incidents were increased remarkably around the villages and towns. That is due to availability of mobile network services around these areas, and most of the nomads have adopted this technology and they need to be nearby the network's coverage.

Based on the case analysis, for instance, case3: Majority of the population in Nuba Mountain are non-Arab. Farmers and nomads in this area were fully dependent on solving conflict using local spiritual way locally called (Al-kijour). Through interviews with elder people, the study found that those people they are believed deeply in Al-kijour as the means of conflict resolutions and reconciliations. In the past, alliances between Nuba tribes and Arab nomads have had a significant impact on conflict resolution over land-use rights in Nuba mountains areas. Now, after the revolution of education in Nuba Mountains, Especially among new generations, we found that the situation is quite different than that in the past which based on Al-kijour. Recently, in Nuba Mountains, there is a war between the Sudan people's liberation movement (SPLM), and the Sudanese government. The ongoing war has affected the agricultural and rangeland severely, the majority of people has become dependent on foreign aid and has left their jobs due to insecurity. However, elders have reported that the situation right now is very complicated because almost most of the population was armed with modern weapons that fuel the war intensively. In some cases, those affected by the abuse resort to government courts were collapsed to old alliances with Arab nomads. It can be for alliances between the indigenous people of Nuba, and nomadic Arabs, they play an important role in resolving conflicts over land use rights. The results in Table 4 and Case 4: depicted that the regulations of mechanized agriculture are the best solution to avoid conflict over land use rights. In fact, there are nomad's routs in Greater Kordofan were delineated by local government, while farming with mechanized and traditional rain-fed agriculture is often expanded. The expansion of agriculture has blocked the nomad's routs that lead to grazing inside the farms. This situation usually creates misunderstandings between them and conflicts. It was clearly can be seen in Table 4, 89.7% claim that in order to stop the conflict, all weapons should be collected especially from Arabian nomads which will reduce conflict occurrence in the study area.

In case1: the study illustrated that Women in the study area have a major role in the fueling conflict which were locally known as (Hacamat). Hacamat is women who encourage men to engage in fighting in terms of defending tribe assets and land. Sometimes Hakamat would play a negative role which would lead to murder between farmers and nomads. However, one of the most widely used mechanisms for solving a conflict between farmers and nomads is Judiah. Here, elders from both sides will meet, debate, investigate and then decide who started the offense, what are the losses in lives and wealth, and decide the best way of solving the issue.

In the past, there is an effective mechanism for resolving the conflict between farmers and nomads in Greater Kordofan, the alliance Mentioned by the respondents in the case1: alliance system, Farmers allow nomads to use their land after harvest, On the other hand, nomads care about farmer's animals in the rainy season.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study showed that the main causes of conflict in Greater Kordofan State between farmers and nomads are crop damage and destruction by livestock. Also competition on scarce and limited pasture resources, livelihood style and ongoing conflicts are other causes of conflict. Further, the study revealed that the local leaders from both sides have developed many strategies for coexistence with conflicts over land use rights as well local solutions and strategies to deal with conflicts such as (Judiah) negotiation that could be based on local traditions.

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